

Message Text

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TAGS

SUBJECT: ARTHUR ASHE IN SOUTH AFRICA AGAIN

1. ARTHUR ASHE HAS MORE THAN TENNIS ON HIS MIND WHEN HE VISITS SOUTH AFRICA. THE BLACK AMERICAN TENNIS STAR, WHO IS KNOWN FOR HIS WIDER INTERESTS OUTSIDE OF TENNIS, HAS LONG BEEN INTERESTED IN THE RACE SITUATION AND THE PLIGHT OF THE DISADVANTAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

2. THE 1975 WIMBLEDON AND WCT CHAMPION IS CURRENTLY MAKING HIS FOURTH VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA IN TWO YEARS. FOR SOME YEARS PRIOR TO 1973 ASHE WAS DENIED AN ENTRY VISA INTO SOUTH AFRICA BECAUSE OF HIS OUTSPOKEN OPPOSITION TO THAT COUNTRYS APARTHEID POLICY. ASHE IS NO LESS AN OPPONENT OF APARTHEID FOR HAVING BEEN TO SOUTH AFRICA, BUT HE BELIEVES HE IS NOW MORE PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN THE SITUATION THAN HE WAS BEFORE.

3. THIS YEAR, BESIDES THE TENNIS, ASHE IS CLOSELY INVOLVED IN TWO PROJECTS AIMED AT BENEFITING DISADVANTAGED SOUTH AFRICANS, AND DURING THE WEEKEND HE TOOK PART IN TWO CEREMONIES MARKING PROGRESS WITH THESE PROJECTS. SATURDAY IN JOHANNESBURG MR ASHE ANNOUNCED THE NAMES OF FOUR BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN WINNERS OF SCHOLARSHIPS FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDY IN THE UNITED STATES. THE SCHOLARSHIP GREW OUT OF THE 1974 VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA BY ASHE,
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CONGRESSMAN ANDREW YOUNG OF ATLANTA AND DR ROBERT GREEN OF

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY, WHO JOINTLY RAISED MONEY IN THE US FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND. THE FOUR WINNERS WILL STUDY AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY IN FIELDS OF CAREER COUNSELING, MEDICINE, SOCIAL WORK AND ZOOLOGY, RESPECTIVELY. IT IS HOPED THAT SUCH SCHOLARSHIPS WILL BE AWARDED ANNUALLY TO DESERVING BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS.

4. ON SUNDAY MR ASHE ADDRESSED A DEDICATION CEREMONY AT THE SITE OF A NEW 230,000 DOLLAR TENNIS COMPLEX IN SOWETO. JOHANNESBURGS TWIN BLACK CITY. THE COMPLEX, WHICH WILL HAVE A CLUBHOUSE AND 21 COURTS WHEN COMPLETED LATE IN 1976, IS BEING CONSTRUCTED BY THE AFRICAN TENNIS FUND WHICH ASHE SET UP LAST YEAR TO PROMOTE TENNIS AMONG BLACK YOUTH IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE FUND HAS RAISED MONEY FOR THE PROJECT FROM AMERICAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESS FIRMS DURING THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS. ASHE SAID AT THE CEREMONY THAT HE HOPED SOWETO MIGHT ONE DAY PRODUCE A BLACK PLAYER TO REPRESENT SOUTH AFRICA IN THE DAVIS CUP COMPETITION.

5. IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN OPEN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS BEING PLAYED AT JOHANNESBURGS ELLIS PARK STADIUM, ASHE HAS NOT FARED AS WELL AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS. IN 1973 AND 1974 HE REACHED THE MENS SINGLES FINALS, LOSING BOTH TIMES TO FELLOW-AMERICAN JIMMY CONNORS. THIS YEAR HE WAS ELIMINATED IN THE SINGLES BY UNSEEDED SOUTH AFRICAN PAT CRAMER, BUT HAS REACHED THE MENS DOUBLES SEMIFINAL ROUND TOGETHER WITH HIS AMERICAN PARTNER, BRIAN GOTTFRIED. BOWDLER

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